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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The editor is not responsible for opinions expressed in this department. All communications must be accompanied by the name and address of the writer to ensure publication.

CHRISTMAS WEEK IN THE LANKENAU HOSPITAL, PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Dear Editor: Christmas is, apparently, the most wonderful celebration that Christianity hath endowed to mankind. In the Lankenau Hospital, the medical staff, the internes, the nursing force, the patients, and the servants are all given an equal opportunity to indulge in the beautiful worship which is made possible by the numerous services held in the various wards and departments. The hospital is converted into a veritable fairyland by means of holly, mountain laurel, evergreen and Christmas trees. The Christmas service for the patients is celebrated one afternoon in Christmas week. Ministers from various Lutheran churches in Philadelphia officiate. An address appropriate to the occasion is given and Christmas carols are sung at this service. Gifts are distributed by the supervisors and house mother and the gratitude of the patients is not only made known by words of appreciation but by the shining eyes and beaming faces which meet one everywhere. On Christmas morning, a group of pupil nurses, rising early, sing carols to the patients. The Christmas festival for the pupil and graduate nurses is held on one of the evenings of Christmas week. After a short address and the singing of Christmas songs the nurses spontaneously drift back with the memories of childhood and catch the contagious spirit of Christmas joy in opening gifts and feasting on Christmas goodies. The Christmas service for the deaconesses is held in the Chapel of the Drexel Home. The doctors and nurses are invited to this service. An impressive Christmas program is rendered. Christmas in the dispensary and social department of the hospital requires a special afternoon of Christmas week. Useful gifts have been prepared by the social service and dispensary workers. A tree and a room are made festive and the poor in whom this department is interested are given a real Christmas. After a short service, gifts are dispensed and refreshments are served. The real joy awakened in the lives of these recipients brings to those who make possible this result that keen sense of satisfaction which is the greatest possible reward. There is also a festival for the servants, the gifts being prepared by deaconesses. The master thought of the authorities of the Lankenau Hospital and Drexel Home is to bring a real Christmas to every person connected with the institutions. The light of the Christmas Star thus sheds its wonderful message and brings peace and love into the hearts of all those whose minds can be penetrated by its kindly rays.

E. B.

THE COMPLICATION OVER REGISTRATION FEES IN ENGLAND

I.

Dear Editor: May I, an English subscriber to THE AMERICAN JOURNAL OF NURSING, draw the attention of your readers to a very misleading paragraph under the Foreign Department of the October number of the JOURNAL? It reads,—“Early in its history, at a time when the college (The College of Nursing) probably expected to control state registration, it made nurses the following promise: ‘If, therefore, you are on the College Register, you will automatically and without further fee be placed upon the State Register when the Nurses Registration Bill is passed.’” The writer goes on to say,—“Attracted by this promise, many nurses, we have been told 15,000 in all, registered with the college by paying it their fees.” Now, what are the facts? The writer is quoting piecemeal, and

has omitted the most important part of the clause referring to the position of the College and State Registration. The full paragraph runs as follows: "The Council of the College of Nursing has drafted a 'Nurses Registration Bill,' which provides that the Register already formed by the College of Nursing shall be the first Register under the Act. If, therefore, you are on the College Register you will automatically and without further fee be placed upon the State Register when the 'Nurses Registration Bill' is passed." The significance of the omission of the first four lines will not escape the notice of your readers, and similarly the omission of the inverted commas. The bill which actually did pass was not one drafted by any nursing organization, but by the Government, and it was passed with the support of all nursing organizations, including the College of Nursing, the largest nursing organization in the United Kingdom, representing nearly 20,000 trained nurses. May I suggest that the writer of the Foreign Department when wishing to give any information to your readers concerning the British College of Nursing, should apply to the College itself for particulars, which will always gladly be given. I mention this because the *British Journal of Nursing* in its issue of July 31, 1920, made the identical half quotation to which I have taken exception, and it would seem, to say the least, unnecessary to quote from other sources when first hand authority is available.

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II.

Dear Editor: In my simplicity I omitted the first four lines of the paragraph above because I thought their meaning was the same as that of the last four,—not in any way different. Do the first four lines contain a joker? Nurses are not skilled in verbal subtleties, and they received, from the whole paragraph, the impression that, in paying a fee to the college, they were securing their State Registration. Evidently they should have known better. Miss Rundle's letter implies that they should have reflected: "Suppose that the 'Nurses Registration Bill' promoted by the College does not win, then what about my fee?" At that time the Government Bill was not anticipated. There were two rival bills in Parliament and the College fully expected theirs to win. But in my former article I made no criticism of the College,—I simply referred to the embarrassing situation that had arisen. Can that embarrassment be denied? When the Government Bill passed, involving its own registration fee, were not many nurses taken by surprise? Did not many of them write to the College in protest and did not some of them demand their money back? Perhaps by this time the College may have proceeded on some satisfactory line of adjustment about the fees paid under a misunderstanding. If so, we would be interested to know what it has done. The *British Journal of Nursing*, I must add, has more than once published the full, complete text of all the College articles, including the paragraph above referred to.

LAVINIA L. DOCK, R.N.

ALUMNAE ATTENDANCE

Dear Editor: We so frequently hear members of the various alumnae associations in giving an excuse for poor attendance say: "There is no inducement; not enough social atmosphere. They are dry, etc." Will some of your readers give the seemingly remote definition of a popular, interesting, well attended